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"PUSEY

BY GEORGE E  
PASTOR OF THE HARVARD CHUR

BOSTON  
JAMES MUNROE AND  
1843

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GEORGE E. ELLIS,  
HARVARD CHURCH, CHARLESTOWN.

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BOSTON:  
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# DISCOURSE

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THE NEW ASPECT OF THE CONTROVERSY

BETWEEN

ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY, AND THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE  
JUDGMENT,

PRESENTED UNDER THE NAME OF

“PUSEYISM.”

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BY GEORGE E. ELLIS,  
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# DISCOURSE.

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GALATIANS, V. 1.

STAND FAST THEREFORE IN THE LIBERTY, WHEREWITH CHRIST HATH MADE  
US FREE, AND BE NOT ENTANGLED AGAIN WITH THE YOKE OF BONDAGE.

“THE Liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free,” is Liberty in all that concerns the soul, in its Relation to and in its Intercourse with its Maker ; it is spiritual Liberty in Faith and Worship. The Christian Religion has removed all obstructions between man’s soul and God, all ceremonies and mediations, all sacrifices and oblations, all priests and propitiations. Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and man ; his Gospel, received into the heart and interpreted by the reason, is the medium of Christian Salvation. Thus we receive his Gospel as committed to the everlasting records of the New Testament. We acknowledge no other authority ; we ask for no one on earth to mediate for us ; so long as we have the Bible, we allow the Divine right of no institution or office, as essential to our knowledge of the terms of Christian Salvation, or to our application of them. We take the Bible and say, this is our priest, our charter, our covenant, our creed ; it needs no supplement of man’s contrivance ; we are responsible to God alone for its use.

Yet in saying all this so distinctly and positively, we directly oppose the professed convictions of many disciples of Jesus Christ, who maintain and insist as positively upon the necessity of an authority, external to and coexistent with the

authority of Scripture. Priests and Sacrifices, they tell us, are not done away ; Scripture requires a *supplement* in Tradition, to explain it, to be a commentary upon it ; an institution called the Church is the earthly fold, with its enclosures and its shepherds, through which alone the sheep of the covenant can be introduced into the heavenly fold.

The Bible, or the Church, — this is the great issue for the higher departments of controversy in our day. The question is not a new one, but it takes new forms and aspects. It is to be agitated in our day with a power and an interest, of which as yet the community has but a faint conception.

This question has long been before the world under different shapes and names ; it now presents itself under the name of "Puseyism." The use of that word is to be regretted, for it is indecorous and unjust. Custom and necessity may to a degree be an apology for it, for the word now expresses a system, and is the title of a controversy in which all professed Christians have an interest and a share. To those who ask what non-Episcopalians, and Unitarians especially, have to do with this controversy, we answer, with great brevity, we have an interest in deciding the essentials of Christian Faith, in opposing superstition, bigotry, and priestcraft.

The controversy embraces this issue, whether the Scriptures alone, or the Scriptures and Church Authority taken together, decide the obligations of Christians, and the conditions of Salvation. The length and breadth of the issue suspended is simply this, shall every doctrine of faith, every ceremonial of worship, every institution of religion, expose itself to the free scrutiny of all professing Christians, so that they may ask the reason for it, may claim to understand and approve it ? Or shall there be an authority external to Scripture, that of the Church, which shall challenge the reverence and obedience of Christians, which shall decide, or rather, prevent all controversies, which shall enjoy prerogatives and enrobe itself in the solemn folds of mystery and sanctity ? This is the question, which is now expressed by the word *Puseyism*. It is a great question ; we wish clearly to apprehend the issue, to know whither it looks, whereto these things will grow. It is not for the sake of controversy, that we institute the inquiries and utter and vindicate the views, which, under a sense of responsibility, we now present. We do not wish to glory in the confusion, which now distracts those who,

agreeing in the necessity of Church Authority, are divided only as to the how much or how little of it they must allow. We are looking for a better lesson. We wish to have calm and clear apprehensions of important truth; and standing as we do, at the extremest possible distance from the principle of Church Authority, we wish to define our position.

The first point, which we would aim to make as clear as language will express it, is to present the essential issue of the question before us. It is to decide, not what form of Church Discipline is most expedient, effective, or dignified, most ancient or prevalent, but whether any external or supplementary authority, or government of any kind, is to be linked with the reception and study of the Bible. Let it be distinctly understood, that here is a question with two sides, and that the intelligent Christian must rank himself upon the one or the other side, knowing the conditions of his choice and meeting all that it involves. There is the true Protestant principle, that if a man has the Bible in his hands, and never sees a church, a priest, or a sacrament, never hears of a creed or a council, he still has all that is necessary to his knowledge and improvement of the terms of salvation. This is one side of the question now in agitation. We adopt this side with our eyes and ears open. We know all that it involves of sectarianism, fanaticism, rationalism, and infidelity. Yet we choose it, we prefer it, we identify ourselves with it, we glory in it, we would die for it with joy, if it needs more confessors. The other side of the question is that, which includes more or less of Church Authority, supplementary help with the Bible, whether it be the writings of two Fathers or of twenty, the traditions of one century or of six, one creed or three creeds, five points of doctrine, or thirty-nine articles of faith, one saving ordinance, or two saving sacraments, one order of priests, or three orders of clergy, a Pope, or a council, or a presbytery. There are very many sects who take this side in common, and embrace the sentiment which maintains the necessity of Church Authority. All individuals and all communions are on this side, who impose a creed, if it be but one single line. The parties upon this side are in continual contention as to how much of this extra-Scriptural Authority they are to adopt. Thus far we are at issue with all of them. We take the other side, and keeping the liberty of choosing all forms, rites, discipline, and institu-



tions, first in accordance with the spirit of our religion, and then with reference to our edification, our conscientious preferences, and our taste, and then with reference to the fitness of place and time, we are ready with all charity and humility to say, that we are on the better side, and to invite at least all that hesitate to come to us.

Let the distinction between these two sides be clearly understood ; let not the line which divides them ever be blurred ; let all the conditions and consequences of committal to either of them be known ; let there be no subterfuges ; no reserve ; no sweetening of bitter pills for the sake of disguising them ; let theories be consistently followed out ; let us choose the good, even if evil result from it, rather than the evil with the hope, that it will issue in good. Choose intelligently, and then be consistent.

Now let us put in a plea of Justification ; some but not all will think it necessary. Why, it may be asked, why not be satisfied with taking your own side and keeping aloof from the other side ? We answer, because we are crowded and shall soon be trampled upon. And we give a more solemn and significant answer even than this. We say, that the great and holy truth, which in spite of our differences is common to both divided parties, is hazarded and jeopardized by unconsecrated weapons, and by a departure from the rules of Gospel warfare. Church Authority has ever concerned itself more with consciences than with sins. We cannot maintain our ground without defending it. The liberty, which was obtained by protest, must be secured by argument and good use.

It is hard to dispute, it is disagreeable to bring into contempt anything which mingles itself with the religious sentiments of a professed Christian. In opposing the pretensions of Ecclesiastical Authority we must offend those who approve it. But why ? Why need we offend them ? They will tell us that we deny what they approve, we condemn what they revere. Be it so. But before yielding to the pain which we inflict, and murmuring at it, would it not be wise to ask yourselves why you hold doctrines which may be thus attacked and condemned, why do you maintain a point involving the eternal interests of others as wise, as pure, as sinful, or as sincere as yourselves, and a point which seems to them altogether absurd and not to be allowed ? Look then first to the doctrine which we attack, and reconsider it, spend your first

excited feeling and interest there, be sure you are right in it, and then hear what we say, we, who have all the means of learning the truth, and all the desire to learn it that you have. Be careful how you hold doctrines which those, over whom you have no advantage, are induced by every Christian feeling and hope, which they cherish, to impugn. We do not deny your Christian character, your spiritual attainments, your religious liberty, or the acceptableness of your mode of worship to the Father who is a Spirit. We will honor you for every grace and virtue which you exhibit ; we will worship with you, if we cannot enjoy the mode which we prefer ; we will exchange with you all sympathies and charities, we will call you worthy disciples of Jesus Christ, and pray to be admitted with you into his kingdom. Neither will we question your liberty to connect with your Christian professions a belief in any documents or terms which you may please, nor will we deny your right to institute those modes of governing your churches, disposing your services, ordaining your clergy, and administering the sacraments, that may recommend themselves to you. On all these points, however, you are as much open to our scrutiny and criticism, as we are to yours. But what we do and will do, in spite of the bugbear charge of attacking the Church which is preferred against us, is to impugn some conditions, which you make essential on our part to the reception and enjoyment and rewards of the Christian faith. We charge you with adding to the terms of Christian salvation, of confounding some of the most trivial and some of the most unwarrantable and some of the most pernicious conditions with the Gospel of the grace of God. We differ with you as to what is essential, and what is not essential, to the prevalence and security of Christian truth and principle on this earth. We read history, we observe the experience and ask the opinions of our fellow men, and from all these sources we learn that everything that makes the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or religion in general, oppressive, repulsive, uninviting, or questionable, has no part in it, tends to nourish infidelity and to cause confusion of the truth with falsehood, and is therefore to be put away. Men justly dread every doctrine which has once written itself in their blood, and wrung their nerves, and riven their sinews, and poured boiling lead into their throats, and burned them at the stake. The doctrines which do this we call doctrines additional, supple-

mentary to the Scripture, we trace them in channels of their own, channels not yet obliterated, to the principle of Church Authority, and we renounce the principle in its mustard-seed germ, for against the full-grown trunk, if God has not so effectually blasted it that it may not grow again, we could do nothing.

We believe that many persons are induced to give their apparent countenance and support to the sects which are based upon this principle of Church Authority, and especially to the Episcopal sect, without a full apprehension of what the principle involves. In conventions, in ecclesiastical proceedings, in statistical reports, their names and numbers are used as conscientious adherents to a system, of whose issues they are utterly ignorant, of whose pretensions they have no just idea, whose supposed proof they have never examined. Will such persons allow us to say, that the more solemn a doctrine, the more momentous its consequences, the more it affects the eternal interests of their brethren, just in that proportion should they be solicitous to examine its proof, or at least to understand what they seem to affirm? If an individual knowingly chooses to give his apparent favor and real support to any doctrine, in utter indifference as to what it involves, let him or his children take the consequences, when ecclesiastical despotism shall grow again to what it once was. It is not at all unusual to hear some, who are ranked among the most stringent advocates of Church Authority, accuse those who deny it of ignorance. This is a cool and comfortable way of regarding an opponent, namely, to look at him through the eyes of their own ignorance, the effect being to effuse the hue, as is seen in looking through smoked glass. There are other advocates of the principle of Church Authority, who wonder that a person can acquaint himself with what they call "the beautiful order of the Church," and not seek its pleasant shade. Such persons may never have heard of travellers, who after exploring other countries prefer to come back to their own. They may as well adopt the test of the Swedenborgians, that no one is in a fit state to examine their system, unless he is ready and disposed to receive it. Roman Catholic writers will often boast of the majority of Christian believers. But how many of their majority are *believers*, how many of them have ever dreamed of what their Church alleges for itself, to say nothing about reviewing its

proof? An Episcopal minister has lately asserted in print, that nine tenths of professed Christians believe one of the doctrines of Church Authority. He would have been nearer the truth had he said, that nine tenths of professed Christians do not believe anything. *Believe!* How much does that word mean? It has conditions, it has consequences; there are conditions and consequences to each tenet which *belief* covers. When it may be said of a man, that he *believes* anything as a part of religious truth, it may be said of him, that he has thought more than most persons have thought. We do not say, that a Christian ought to understand all that is involved in Ecclesiastical pretensions. But we do say, that whoever professes to believe, that the eternal interests of any human being depend on them, ought to understand them himself. How solemnly important is it to know what is involved in a doctrine, which affects the welfare of human beings for eternity — especially when the doctrine does not concern the conduct, but merely the belief of men! Assertions, as to the dependence of men's salvation upon the helping power of the Church, are made in the "Oxford Tracts," which are absolutely astounding, and which we read with amazement as coming from men, who must know from their own experience, that the infirmities of the heart and flesh (of which they say nothing of practical value) are far more hazardous than the aberrations of the intellect.

These conditions and consequences — far reaching as are the latter — may justify our examination of professed doctrines. And let us add, if it be necessary, that the *Church* offers to receive all, and to ordain all ministers who are fit for their own communions, if they will embrace her tenets. It might seem also to be for the interest of the clergy to aggrandize their office by investing it with the high claims of Church Authority. We do not this, because we dare not do it, and should be apt to laugh in each other's face when performing our parts, as Cicero says did the priests and augurs of Rome when heathen, and as we know some do now when Rome is Christian. We have no interest but to learn the truth, and we have all the means that others have for acquiring it.

Again apologizing for using the word "Puseyism," we proceed to show how it presents that great question of the Bible, or the Church. The controversy now in agitation involves far more important and serious questions, than those which have yet come into popular notice. Some of the

people differ from some of the Bishops in thinking that they have some interest in the matter. The controversy springs from the bosom of the Church of England, and from Oxford, the more ancient of her universities. The Reformation of ecclesiastical abuses was checked in its midway progress in England, and brought to a violent close. Her established Church was the result of a compromise between liberty and authority, between Puritanism and Prelacy. The Puritans wished to remove every vestige of the Roman Hierarchy and discipline, and therefore they struck at the principle of Church Authority. Political changes gave the Puritans a temporary ascendancy, which, however, they soon lost. The English Church, severing itself from the Roman Church, took with it something, and left something behind; and as it has always mourned more or less for some portions of what it left, and been assailed for what it brought away, we should understand its relations to Romanism in these particulars. The English Church retained of the Roman its whole hierarchy, down to the sub-deacon, (the monarch or the prime minister, it is hard at the present time to say whether of the two, being the English Pope,) the Liturgy, translated from the Roman Mass Book, the three creeds, Apostles, Nicene, and Athanasian, two of the sacraments, viz. Baptism and the Eucharist, the exclusive prerogative of Bishops to ordain and confirm, the differences of rank, dress, and privilege among the clergy, festivals, fasts, and saints' days. These were the borrowed jewels. The flesh pots, which the Church of England left behind with Romanism, were the plea of infallibility, the inquisition, the confessional, the sacrifice of the mass, and the spirit of unity and subordination. The American Episcopal Church differs from the English, in taking out of its service book the Athanasian creed, and the forgiveness of sins in the office for visiting the sick.

The English Church began in resisting Popery, and in making concessions to Puritanism. The preface to the Liturgy of Edward VI. contained a passage, lamenting that the work of purification was left incomplete, and breathing a prayer, that those who came after might carry on the work. For attempting to fulfill this very prayer, our fathers were driven to these wildernesses. The Reformers attempted to carry on the work in Elizabeth's time, and they suffered fire and im-

prisonment. A meeting of some Bishops, and other divines, who afterwards became Bishops, met with the Bishop of London in 1641, and suggested the very changes which the Puritans or their successors wished. But the former method was soon reversed ; concessions were now made to the Romanists, instead of to the Puritans, and resistance, instead of opposing the Romanists, turned against the Puritans. It is a remarkable fact, that the Church of Rome has never yet made an official concession to the spirit of reform.

During the brief period in which the Church of England made concessions to the Puritans, it did so only sparsely and grudgingly, not enough to satisfy the Puritans, but too many to please "the Church." Now the great object of the Oxford, or Puseyite, or High Church party in the present controversy, is to win back what was then conceded — to repair breaches, to reinstate Church Authority in all its ramifications, to gather sacred associations around a ritual and ceremonial worship, and to rear an ecclesiastical institution, as an appendix or a preface to the moral law, and as a supplement to Scripture. These are the objects and purposes of those in a Protestant Church, who are said to have Papistical tendencies. If the system must bear the name of an individual, it should rather be called from the Rev. Mr. Froude, with whom it originated.

There has always lingered, indeed there has always appeared, in the English Church, the full spirit of that system, which has now been suddenly brought under popular notice. The system may well bear the name of Oxford Divinity, for in that home of antiquity the system has a natural birth-place and life. Oxford has always been behind the age in its spirit and tendencies ; it has ever been the uncompromising opponent of innovation. It differs widely in history and character from Cambridge, where philosophy and literature and the sciences have been cherished, rather than pictures and images of saints. Oxford will now show to its visitors the prison door, which closed upon Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, and the spot where the flames of martyrdom climbed around their flesh. Sydney Smith, himself a pensioner of the Church, says that "all establishments die of dignity ;" a kind of slow poison, which has been killing Oxford ever since its birth. Amid the solemn shades of its Gothic cloisters, in the repose of its kindred bookmen, who relish the dusty aroma of its

treasured volumes, there is very much to nourish the spirit which reveres antiquity, and looks out with dread upon the bustling world, and the restlessness of human thought. A whole ray of sunlight has not been seen at Oxford, since the deep-set abutments and reëntering angles and massive towers of its grey piles were reared, and the crowded walls of dingy stain make the day shorter there, by one hour, than in any other part of the earth under the same latitude.

Lord Bacon with profound and comprehensive wisdom observed, that things alter for the worse spontaneously, if they be not altered for the better designedly. Some kindred spirits at Oxford, whose pleasant home and easy cares gave them much of each other's society, looked out upon the world, and saw a state of things with which they were not pleased. They saw that ecclesiastical authority was every where relaxed, that religious tests in civil interests had been taken off, that "Dissent" in doctrine and discipline was advancing with rapid strides, that the various religious sects were providing excitements for the people, in extra meetings, in philanthropic efforts, and visiting societies, and finally, the Oxford men learned, five years after it had been published in the newspapers, that the Roman Church was rebuilding her altars.

Thus moved, a little coterie at Oxford, consisting principally of four clergymen — Dr. Pusey, and the Rev. Messrs. Newman, Keble, and Williams, began about ten years ago to draw the attention of the public, by the issue of a series of publications, entitled "Tracts for the Times." The series had been extended to the ninetieth number, in the midst of intense excitement and increasing opposition. The object of the Tract No. 90 was to put upon the thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England a construction, which would make them acceptable to two different classes of persons, viz. to dissatisfied Romanists, who would be willing to join the Church of England, were it not for her intensely Protestant character, and to dissatisfied members of the Church of England, who were on the point of leaving their own communion because it was so abusive of Rome. This Tract was regarded as a throwing aside of the veil by the Oxford coterie, and was so decided and bold, that the Bishop of Oxford put an end to the publications by the exercise of his authority. Yet this was not putting an interdict upon the promulgation of such opinions. For as the opinions had been advanced in

various works, such as sermons, occasional pamphlets, reviews, essays, stories, poems, &c., so they continued to find their way to the public through the same multiplied channels of the press.

To characterize these publications by any epithets or descriptions, of a merely general character, would scarcely convey an idea of their purport and object. They are for the most part written in a subdued tone, and as their writers would describe it in an "awful manner." Still there is a lordly and presuming spirit, an overbearing and dictatory temper, a self-assured and one-sided mode of address, which are apparent on every page. They show learning of a certain kind ; i. e. a remembrance of things that have been forgotten, and which might as well remain under oblivion ; dry and useless recollections of past follies and errors, old wives' fables, nonsensical legends, and exploded superstitions, revived for the sake of the reverence which once attached to them. They presume upon the ignorance of the multitude, and take no note of those perplexities which invest religious histories. The deep and involved questions in spiritual philosophy and in historical records, touching the very foundations of faith, and tasking the most thoughtful minds in civilized Christendom, are nowhere recognised or spoken of in the "Tracts."

And now the question arises, do their authors advocate Popery, Romanism ? We may answer as they answer, No ! They are the only consistent Episcopalians ; they alone are true to the theory of their Church. Individuals among them have trespassed on the Roman territory, but the sect has not, for the field which they have labored upon is common to Papists and Episcopalians ; it has never been fenced off by either party. Undoubtedly there is at the bottom of the new movement a lingering fondness for Roman prerogatives and glories ; perhaps there is a rivalry in the love of ceremony and the love of power ; the tail of the dragon does indeed appear, and some of the same kind of paint as that which covers all over the scarlet lady of Babylon. But the Oxford writers insist, that they are only seeking to win back the forced concessions of their Church ; that all their doctrines were recognised by their old Divines, and are part and parcel of Episcopacy, of the system of Church Authority and Institution, which have been cast into the shadow and overlooked or undervalued. They



do not like the term *Protestant*, because it is a mere negation; but they prefer the term *Primitive* as designating their Church. They maintain that the Reformation did more evil than good — that laymen cannot deduce the principles of Christian faith from the Scriptures — that there is no salvation out of the Church — that “the *Sacraments*, not *Preaching*, are the sources of Divine Grace” — that the confessional, and commemorative services for the dead, and prayers to the saints should again come into use — that the instruction and authority of Tradition are coördinate with Scripture — and they teach something very like to the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation, the real presence of Jesus Christ in the bread and wine. They make a deceptive use of certain phrases, by employing terms in their own sense, and making from them statements, which are true only in another sense; thus, “the Church is God’s plan of salvation, and man may not improve upon it.”

The Oxford writers lay the weight of their system upon two principal tenets, which form the very groundwork of Episcopacy, the Apostolical succession of the Episcopal clergy, and the exclusive prerogatives of the Church over which they preside. Their purposed endeavor is, to tighten the bonds of Church Authority, to arouse and spiritualize its sleeping and its worldly ministers, to establish in the minds of the people an idea of an especial and sacred prerogative in Episcopacy, to restore a reverence for antiquity and tradition, the observance of festivals and fasts, and a more frequent administration of the Lord’s Supper — to revive various neglected usages of *holy* memory, to build up even to the clouds the wall which separates the Church from all sects, and then to wage an even-handed, or rather an *affectionate* contest with Rome. They advocate true theoretical Episcopacy — but not Protestantism. The two doctrines of the Apostolical Succession, and of the exclusive prerogatives of the Episcopal clergy, are after all the great matters involved and involving all else. On these rests the principle of Church Authority, which, once established, has a place outside of the earth on which to poise its irresistible lever. These are both Episcopal doctrines, and they are both Roman doctrines.

Holding, therefore, the views which we do, of *the Bible only*, and denying all Church Authority, we must maintain that Puseyism, or High Churchism, is more consistent than Low Churchism, and that Romanism is more consistent than

either; i. e. we can recognise only two systems, our own, and Episcopacy with its theory completely carried out, which is Romanism, saving only the necessity of a male Pope. Instead of resting the controversy with Rome upon single doctrines or institutions, which confessedly need some other support than that which Scripture affords them, we strike at the main question of Church Authority, which embraces them all.

There is a kind of half-way profession of Church principles, which charitably seeks to save the souls of *Dissenters*, without wholly letting go its own exclusive assumptions. We do not ask the benefit of this charity, but return it till its donors will give more. The doctrine of the Apostolical Succession of the Bishops is common to High Church and Low Church Episcopacy, and to Romanism. If it means anything, it means the utmost which it claims to mean; if we allow it at all, we will allow it in its completeness. The theory of it is, that the Apostles have living successors and representatives on this earth, who inherit some of their prerogatives, viz. the Bishops of Dioceses, each being the head or superior of several inferior ministers, called Presbyters and Deacons. It is alledged that there has been an unbroken succession of these peculiar representatives of the Apostles, in the line of Bishops, who alone can ordain ministers. These are said to succeed to the powers of Apostles in the government and discipline of the Church, the framing of constitutions, the enacting of laws, the ordaining of ministers, the forgiveness of sins, and the excommunicating of offenders. It is not pretended that Bishops succeed to all the privileges and immunities of those whom the Savior commissioned, for besides empowering them to bind and to loose, he gave them authority over all devils and to cure diseases, to tread on serpents and scorpions, and to eat any deadly thing without harm. A dose of arsenic would doubtless prove as fatal to a Bishop as to a deacon. Probably the precise date, when the line was drawn between the Apostolic privileges which a Bishop inherited, and those which were alienated, is involved in the indistinctness of "Primitive Usage." The exclusive power to ordain the only authorized ministers of the Christian Religion is prerogative enough for Bishops to claim, for if this is admitted to be their right, Christian liberty is gone forever. Power is put into the hands of a few, who may agree how they will use it. A priesthood is established having more authority, be-

cause it transcends this world, than was given to the Jewish high priest, or than was claimed by the priests of Paganism. This doctrine of Apostolical Succession is not a doctrine to be bandied about at uncertainties, or admitted by parts. If it be true, then the very existence of the Christian Church depends upon it ; if it is not true, then whoever asserts it, or any portion of it, wrongs many Christians, and trifles with a matter altogether too serious for such treatment. Now this exclusive prerogative of ordaining ministers is of itself an " awful " claim; but when taken in connexion with the functions and authority which this ordination confers, and the claims which are advanced by the ministers thus ordained, that is, putting together Apostolical Succession and the Prerogatives of the Episcopal clergy, we may see what a mighty and imposing fabric is reared. This is the temple which the Oxford divines would construct. Its clergy have the power, and they alone have the power, to administer the Christian Sacraments, and the Sacraments in their hands are magical charms. This is a matter on which we must speak distinctly, and listen with all our minds. The Oxford writers assert that the " Sacraments, not preaching, are the sources of Divine Grace," and they say this in the face of Paul's assertion, that " it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. i. 21.) They tell us that Baptism, water poured on the head of an infant, wipes out the stain of sin inherited from Adam, removes the curse of God from those young and lovely brows, relieves the child from the penalty of hell torments, and makes it an heir of bliss. And the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, what awful mystery, what dark magic rather, does Oxford divinity gather around that simple and beautiful ordinance, which Jesus Christ asked his disciples to perpetuate, that when they drank wine and ate bread together, on an occasion which saw them assembled for worship, it should be in remembrance of him. What a potent charm does this ordinance become in the hands of an exclusively authorised clergy, the efficacy depending on their functions, not on the spirit of the receiver ! The Oxford writers assert that theirs is the only Church, " which has a right to be quite sure that it has the Lord's body to give to his people." The minister becomes a priest, the table an altar, the bread and wine a sacrifice, the communion a mysterious inhalation of some wonder-working grace. This is

not a subject to be treated with levity, whatever it may wear of fond superstition, however wide a departure it may indicate from "the simplicity that is in Christ." These two doctrines, which are part and parcel of the Episcopal theory, being once established, the foundation of Church Authority is laid. How then is there room for dispute as to the superstructure, which those, who are thus exclusively and awfully commissioned and empowered, proceed to build upon it? Why contend about lesser matters which are included in the greater, that pass unquestioned? Inquisitorial examinations into the faith of individuals are necessarily required and allowed; ritual services and obligatory ceremonies are imposed; questions of interpretation are settled by authority; fasts and festivals are appointed; consciences are fitted to ready made bandages, and must yield into them, or grow out to fit them. Now if all these are the legitimate issues of an admitted principle, who has a right to resist or question them? The Bishop, by succeeding to the place of an Apostle, is the only one who can ordain, and shall he not be the judge of the whom or the how? Church Authority is the supplement to, and the interpreter of, the Scripture; it must be revered and never resisted; for whether, in any given case, it be exercised rightly or wrongly, it has the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and can enforce what it decrees. It is indeed for us, for all, who question that authority, to demand that it shall never temporize nor waver, that it shall always be consistent with itself, for only thus can we hope that its utter falsity will be exposed.

This may serve to show what we, what all professed Christians, and all who desire to be Christians, have to do with this controversy. For after all, the question presented so excitingly in the existing controversy around us, is the old question, which some have erroneously thought was disposed of at the Reformation — the question of Church Authority, in addition to the Bible, as possessing claims upon Christians. Shall we admit that a body called *the Church* — supposing such a body can be defined, may assume authority over the consciences, the creed, and the worship of Christians, authority to interpret, define, help out, and guide the faith of disciples, to ordain ceremonies and forms, to build up institutions, and to interfere with the terms of salvation?

In reference to this assumed authority, we take a position which is very easily defined, and as we think, as easily re-

tained. Certainly we see more than we could describe all around us to make us satisfied with it, and resolved to hold to it as the very truth of God, the glory of Christ's Church, the refuge and the joy of conscience. We deny that pretended Church Authority, utterly and entirely ; not one syllable of it will we listen to with allowance ; if no two ministers can agree in their creed, if no congregation can be kept united without it, if all public worship must be suspended, and religious discord must prevail without it, we say, let it be so, for any nuisance on this earth is preferable to that of Church Authority. The fear of such lamentable consequences, as we have summoned up, we esteem as idle as any monk's legend, but if they were all to be sadly realized, we distinctly assert our preference of them to the imposition of Church Authority, which has been the cause of more corruption and infidelity, more ignorance and superstition, more bigotry and hypocrisy, more wretchedness and slaughters, than a legion of other evil agencies.

That principle of Church Authority we utterly resist, and we offer against it the following among many objections :

I. It is wholly unwarranted by the New Testament, and unnecessary for the fulfilment of the purposes of the Christian dispensation. Even the preservation of the Christian records, the only materials which we need for salvation, does not depend upon Church Authority, any more than the preservation of Homer's Iliad. Some devoted scholars, whom the Church has excommunicated, have done more for the vindication and the interpretation of those records than the whole bench of Bishops. Their security is found in the hearts and minds of individual believers, and in the over-watching Providence of God. There is no tenet of Christianity which enjoins Church Authority, nor is there any Christian doctrine or institution which requires its aid. Piety before God, and love to man, are its solemn and engaging summaries of duty. And how simple the directions for fulfilling them — for piety, “thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength” — “the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth” — and for love — “thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” — “do good unto all men as ye have opportunity.” “This do and thou shalt be saved.” Where then is there room, where the necessity

for Church Authority to interfere with man's salvation ? The New Testament contains such pointed rebukes, and so many warnings against Jewish traditionary laws and usages, that it is hardly probable that the Christian Religion would have been left to depend for its very essence upon them. Yet the Oxford men tell us, that tradition is necessary in the interpretation of Scripture. But all the difficulties in the interpretation of Scripture lie in a tenfold degree in the interpretation of tradition. On this point we will enlarge under another head. Tradition is necessary to the Oxford system, but it is not necessary to Christianity. It is found necessary to bring in Tradition, because it is confessed that the Bible does not teach that system. If the Divine Law was once made void by Tradition, we ought to have had warning if the law of Christ was to depend upon it for its very sanction.

II. We object, secondly, the undefinable, the illimitable character, which is essential to Church Authority. What shall it be ? How much ground shall it cover ? How far shall it extend ? How shall it be enforced ? Who shall be its agents ? What penalties shall wait upon it ? These are all serious questions. To assure yourselves that they are not visionary, read all Christian history. Look around you now upon the actors in the present controversy, the Romanists, the High Church and the Low Church Episcopalians, divided on this very point. How marvellously does the controversy illustrate the indefiniteness of Church assumptions ; how manifest is the significance of this objection, as now applied ! Who can close his eyes to its illustration ?

The Churchman says that the Apostles, besides writing, taught orally, and established institutions. These oral teachings and institutions are known only through Tradition. Thus Tradition becomes the needful supplement of Scripture, and Tradition is comprised in the writings of the Fathers. But how many are Fathers, and through what length of time ? Augustine, himself one of the most renowned of the so called Fathers, seems to have spoken most wisely, in saying — “ the Apostles were the only Fathers, and all others are but sons.” There are sixteen Fathers numbered in the first three centuries of the Church. We have about the same number of historians of the Protestant Reformation in the same space of time. A pretty close parallel might be run between these Fathers and these historians as to accuracy, mental and moral

qualifications, prejudices, partialities, and errors. From the whole of either class we can gather much that is useful, we can depend upon no one of them, and all together do not interfere with our right to exercise our own judgment, or to search beyond their writings. Yet this parallel, if strictly carried out, would fail in many particulars, for we have complete histories of the Reformation, and only fragments of the works of the Fathers. Some we know only through professed quotations in the works of others, some are interpolated, some fictitious, and all sadly discordant. Even the Romanists repudiate one hundred and eighty of the extant writings, ascribed to the first six centuries. Bishop Jeremy Taylor candidly allows that the "Fathers consent only to the Canon of Scripture, and hardly to that." Yet Mr. Newman of the Oxford School says, [Lectures on Romanism, p. 225,] "When the sense of Scripture, as interpreted by reason, is contrary to the sense given to it by Catholic antiquity, we ought to side with the latter." But it cannot be doubted that if some of these Fathers were now living, they would be consigned to our lunatic asylums; some of them continued through life in the Pagan notions which they were thought to have cast aside at their conversion.

Such miserable helps as these are said to be necessary to explain the lucid pages of Scripture, and to insure by their aid the salvation of souls. If Scripture needs a Commentary in Tradition, what Commentary shall we have for Tradition, which needs it a thousand fold more? The Jews had a Commentary on the law of Moses, and at least two Commentaries on that. Our Church dignitaries too have liberally furnished us with their Commentaries on the Commentaries of the Fathers, and it is difficult to say in which of them rubbish and nonsense most abound. Our present point, however, has been to show by the evidence of these rival Commentaries, and the human nature that is in them, that the principle of Church Authority is wholly undefinable and illimitable.

III. Again, we object to the principle of Church Authority, that it has, by virtue of its own nature, a constant tendency to aggrandize and extend itself, to make additions to its own code, till it goes far, far beyond the warrant of Scripture, and at last, taking the place of Scripture, wholly supersedes the authority of the record, with a pretence of expounding which it began its encroachments. Was not this precisely the state

of things from which the Reformation in a measure relieved the Christian world? Not to enlarge upon so fruitful a topic, and one so crowded with dread warnings, let us call up some single picture of indisputable historic verity, and wonderfully instructive. Luther had reached the age of manhood, had been the pupil of Monks and of Doctors in Divinity, and was pursuing in a library, large for those days, and in the most famous University of Germany, the studies which resulted in his single-handed combat with the whole hierarchy of Christian Europe. In that library, he by accident discovered one day a Bible, and knew not what it was. A Bible — a holy Bible,—it was to him as much a marvel as it would be to a Hottentot, were it to drop at his feet from the skies. Luther thought that every word of sacred writ was comprised within the clasped covers of his Prayer Book. He knew not that there was a Bible; and the book which he found was covered up in dust. — A true figure of the times was that dusty Bible, and of the state of that Church, whose foundations of sand he was to disturb. Luther knew not that there was a Bible. Yet the whole circling year was pervaded by the functions of Church Authority; there were solemn forms and sacred things all around him, festivals, pictures, rosaries, missals, shrines, madonnas, cells, oratories, chapels, and cathedrals; the city streets and the country roads swarmed with ecclesiastics; Church dignitaries filled the highest posts every where. All these were the issues of Church Authority, and Church Authority had superseded the Bible. When Luther found that Book, he dusted it, and then he read it, and then he sought to make its light shine. The world knows the result. The world has once witnessed the full effects of the principle of Church Authority, when it superseded the Bible. Did it so recommend itself, that we should give it one more trial? It is in the fair way for obtaining such a trial, when it presumes, by one syllable or by one rite, to stand between the human soul and God the searcher of hearts.

IV. To mention but one more objection, and that in itself a decisive one to the principle of Church Authority, we urge the utter impossibility of establishing it upon any legitimate basis. The Roman and English Hierarchies, which respectively call themselves *the Church*, quietly take for granted the very thing at issue, viz. that the opinion of the true disciples of Jesus Christ has at some time been unanimously ex-



pressed, and has through all time been expressed with a uniformity, entirely in contrast with the discordant views of existing sects. Let a period be shown, if possible, when there were no parties in the Christian Church, each embracing some true disciples. As to the Church itself from which this Authority is to issue, we affirm that it is not a visible body, by no earthly possibility could its members be discovered or brought together. The Lamb's Book of Life is not copied from our Ecclesiastical records. As a charitable, or philanthropic institution, or brotherhood of professed believers, perhaps something like a visible Church does exist. But God alone, the Heart-Searcher, He alone knoweth its members. They have never been together since the Saviour ascended on high. They have never been represented in any Council. Their opinion has never been asked as to the authorized interpretation of Scripture, or the legality of any supplement to it. The Church is an invisible body ; its members are known only to Christ their Head, and to God, his Head. Church Authority, even to be entitled to the first condition of its prerogative, would need to be exercised in their name, by their harmonious consent, and enforced by their own justifiable measures. But where are they, where is their representative beneath the skies, who has ever consulted them, where are their decrees ? You might as well ask for the standard to which all the men of good taste in this world would consent, and then assume such a standard, and proceed to persecute all artists who did not adopt it.

But it is said, that the terms and conditions of Church Authority have been defined by General Councils. We answer, there has never been a General Council, and there never can be one on this earth. The thing is an utter impossibility. There have been assemblies so called ; but what were they, how were they constituted ? Picked men, whose opinions and biases were known, have been summoned to them ; the majority, which existed before the Councils were held, had rule in them, and settled the decisions ; dispute in the Councils was followed by persecution out of them. It was thus that Church Authority originated ; thus it has from age to age gathered its accretions.

The first assembly, which is miscalled a General Council, was not held till nearly three centuries after the ascension of the Saviour, and during that period all the heresies and corrup-

tions, which deform the Christian Church, had had their origin and grown ripe. A Council was called at Nice, in Bithynia, in the year 325, for the sake of authorizing the corruption of the simple Christian faith, by confounding the Mediator with the Father, the being who was sent on earth to declare the will of God, with the Being who sent him. This object was temporarily attained by the personal influence of the Emperor Constantine, and Athanasius, an enemy of Arius. Gieseler, an ecclesiastical historian of high authority among Orthodox divines, very significantly remarks, "As the number of Arian bishops present was much smaller than that of their opponents, the decision was in favor of Alexander.—It was established, as the Creed of the Church, that the Son was created from the essence of the Father, and was of the same essence as the Father, and the doctrines of Arius were anathematized." The very Christian Emperor Constantine banished all that would not sign the decree. In good sooth, a famous representation of the Christian Church. Let us see how the Assembly was constituted. There is no agreement as to the number of so called Bishops at Nice, but suppose we take the number 318, generally admitted, how could these represent the Christian Church? The little territory of Isauria, a part of Pisidia, itself only a province of Asia Minor, sent seventeen of its Bishops to the Council. The habitable part of Africa, then crowded with Churches, and as large as the whole of Asia Minor, and which, says Bingham, the great Episcopal Annalist, had at that time nearly seven hundred Bishops, sent only *one* to the Council. All Spain sent but *one*, all Gaul, or France, sent but *one*, Rome *had not even one*. Constantine himself in a few years turned the tables in the controversy; Athanasius was banished, and Arius was received to communion. What are we to say, too, when Councils make contrary decision? Thus Unitarianism was condemned at a Council of 318 Bishops, A. D. 325.—But of the forty-five Councils held in the fourth century, according to Archdeacon Jortin, thirty-two resulted in favor of Arian or Semi-Arian opinions, and only thirteen prevailed on the other side. Says Jerome—"The world groaned to find itself Arian." So much for the earthly representations of that kingdom, which Jesus Christ said was "not of this world." Where then shall we look for a legitimate basis of Church Authority, in interpreting or in making additions to Scripture?

These are the heads of but a small part of the objections, which we might urge to the principle of Church Authority, as imposing either doctrines, ceremonies, or institutions. We dread it, and resist it, because we know its illegitimacy, its arrogance, its enmity to liberty of thought, its encroachments upon the Christian faith. For behold now in this light those two great assumptions, alike of the Roman and the English system, resting upon Church Authority, the Apostolic Succession of the Priesthood, and its exclusive and marvellous prerogatives. Scripture arguments are mere shadows in the train of proofs, by which an attempt is made to sustain Episcopacy; its chief support is from discordant Tradition. The whole object of the Oxford Tract, No. 85 — the most powerful one in the series, is to show the insufficiency of Scripture.

Amid the mist and uncertainty which gather around the early centuries of Christianity, we can conclude with a good degree of assurance, that the forms of ecclesiastical discipline varied in different places. Archbishop Whately candidly admits, what it would seem an unbiased reader of the New Testament would at once discover, that neither the Saviour nor his Apostles instituted any hierarchy, appointed any traditional code, or created any extra-Scriptural tribunal. The form of discipline was left wholly free to the choice of the disciples, according to their preferences and their circumstances. And this liberty was fully used. Rome appears early to have adopted the Episcopal form, Alexandria the Presbyterian, Carthage the Congregational. Diocesan Episcopacy, as it now exists, i. e. the superiority of ministers, called Bishops, to other ministers, called Presbyters and Deacons, was a thing wholly unknown for at least two full centuries of the Church, and had an origin wholly independent of Apostolic appointment. The Apostles and their converts preached in Jewish Synagogues, where they could find them, and very naturally, the leader of the Synagogue became, on his conversion, the minister of the Church. The Apostles, of course, stood foremost and took precedence every where, and all whom they ordained to the ministry had equal privileges. By the suggestion of the Apostles, the disciples chose certain persons to relieve them of a labor, which interfered with their other duties. The seven individuals thus selected were charged with the duty of distributing the charity funds,

and tending upon the communion table, that the Apostles might give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." (Acts, vi.) These persons are called deacons, and they discharged the office now discharged by individuals bearing the same title in our Congregational Churches. Yet Episcopacy makes them an inferior order of clergy. The two other orders are designated by the names of Bishops and Presbyters. But these names in the New Testament designate precisely the same office, namely, that of the minister who presided over a congregation, neither the one nor the other term conveying the idea of dependence, of superiority, or inferiority ; nor can a single text be quoted in which the word, Bishop, denotes a person who presided over several congregations. The identity of the terms, Bishop and Presbyter, is apparent from Acts, xx. 17 and 28, where St. Paul sends to Ephesus for the Elders or Presbyters in that city, and then addresses them as Bishops, each having charge of one flock, not of many. The Episcopalian must here admit, not only the identity of these two titles, but also that there were several Bishops, or Overseers in a single city. There is no avoiding this admission, and it rests not upon disjointed tradition, but upon the Apostolic word. Let Episcopalians tell us who was the presiding Bishop of Ephesus. Was it His Grace the Archbishop John, or His Holiness Pope Peter, or the Right Reverend Barnabas, or Cardinal Timothy ? The smile, which those queries provoke, shows how utterly at variance are all ecclesiastical dignities with the simple usages of Holy, Apostolic times. Even Paul and Barnabas, themselves Apostles, were ordained to their work not by other Apostles, as Bishops so called now ordain Bishops, but by certain teachers or elders at Antioch, (Acts, xiii.) and they afterwards received the right hands of fellowship from three Apostles, (Galatians, ii. 9.)

The earliest pretended records subsequent to the New Testament, from which it is attempted to substantiate the Apostolic appointment of a Hierarchy, are certain Epistles ascribed to Ignatius. No early authors mention these Epistles ; there are two sets of them, differing widely from each other ; they advance doctrines which were not heard of till more than an hundred years after the death of Ignatius ;\* scholars of all

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\* See Note at the end.

denominations doubt them, and their most strenuous advocates admit that they have been grossly corrupted. Why look to such a doubtful record for one of the most essential conditions for the existence of the Christian Church? If Paul could find room in his Epistles to send for his cloak and parchments, and to transmit kind greetings to his personal friends, why could he not spare a single line to tell all coming ages that the Church, which the Saviour had founded, was based upon Diocesan Bishops?

We do indeed trace this Hierarchy to Tradition, to unlicensed Tradition, compelling the observance of a custom which convenience and circumstance first recommended. As the central Synagogue, congregation, or church in town or city enlarged, it was convenient for some of its members in the suburbs to establish new places of worship. These might be presided over by some fit person, sent from the parent congregation to preach, exhort, and pray; the minister of the parent congregation being still looked to for counsel, sympathy, and help. This was the natural origin of Episcopacy, and then it had an unnatural and an unscriptural growth amid abounding corruptions. And from this corruption has now sprouted the pretence of Apostolical Succession for the Roman and the English Priesthood. The pretence is not to be allowed, for it identifies the very existence of the Christian Church with poor fables, and rotten supports, and fearful hazards. If every link of the chain cannot be traced and proved, what a risk holds our faith in peril! We well know how a certain class of minds may be wrought upon by the bold assertion of especial authority, on the part of a particular order of ministers. This is the secret of much of the remaining hold, which Episcopacy has upon the affections of its disciples. There is great power in the pretence. The Oxford divines do not flinch, they are consistent and bold in laying down its *awful* conditions. They assert that there is no power or virtue in the Lord's Supper, if it be administered by those not ordained by Bishops, and that all ministers, who presume to officiate at the rite without such ordination, "are treading in the footsteps of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, whose awful punishment you read of in the Book of Numbers, xvi. comp. with Jude 11." Tract 35. This is plain speech. So also do they speak plainly when they say, in tracing their Hierarchy, that "every link in the chain is known from St. Peter

to the present English Archbishops." But this, to speak in equally plain terms, is a downright misstatement. No mortal man can tell us who were the first seven Bishops of Rome. Baronius, a Popish historian, admits that, in a succession of fifty Popes, not one of them was either pious or virtuous, that during different series of years there had been no Popes, at other times two or three together, and that the rival Popes of Rome and Avignon excommunicated each other. Then, too, the Roman Church, from which the English Church descends, has excommunicated its daughter, and the ban has never been removed. Observe, too, what a risk of extinction the English Church was once subjected to. During the period in which England was without a King, and Cromwell ruled it, Episcopacy was put aside. At the Restoration of the Monarchy only nine of the Bishops survived, the eldest being near four score years of age. Had Cromwell, who at his death was but fifty-nine, reached that same age, it is more than probable that England could not have furnished the three Bishops necessary to constitute another Bishop. Rome, who had excommunicated her, would not have helped her in the emergency. Then what would have become of the Church of Christ? It would have been forever extirpated. This sad chance had been foreseen, but not provided against; a hasty security was seized upon as soon as possible, and thirteen new Bishops were consecrated in a little more than two months.

Through how corrupt a channel at many intervals and in many characters must the line of Bishops proceed! Some of them during the Middle Ages had their sacred office purchased in infancy, were inducted into it in boyhood, and without knowing how to read the New Testament, or even that such a book existed, they might don their robes once a year for some ceremonial, and spend the rest of their time in lawless fighting, or intrigue. Yet the Christian Church is to be identified with the prerogatives of many men such as these, while Christian ministers themselves, like Watts, Doddridge, and Robert Hall, who have kindled the life of piety in millions of hearts, are to be considered as intruders, whose labors God will not bless! But let the theory be held in consistency, if held at all.

The distinction of orders among the clergy, wholly unscriptural as it is, is followed by pernicious consequences,

consequences which, so far as they affect the faith, impede its vital power, rather than constitute one of its essential conditions. Its first fruit is rivalry. It has become the fashion for the Bishops of the Episcopal sect in this country, to take the name of our Commonwealths. This custom has neither propriety nor antiquity nor precedent to justify it. The pretension may not do much harm now, but if the sect should largely increase, who that observes the strife for all other offices does not know, that the old question of the disciples — “Who shall be greatest?” — will frequently come up in dispute and bitter feeling, and party division? How wise, then, was the Saviour’s counsel — “Ye are all brethren!”

These, then, are the weak foundations, and the objectionable fruits of the principle of Church Authority, as imposed upon Christians without warrant of Scripture. Our grounds of assurance, our duty to resist it, are plain. It will not be necessary that we set ourselves in constant warfare against it. Error is ever continually struggling to correct itself; indeed it accomplishes much that way, though amid blunders. The upholders of the anti-Protestant principles, which we have examined, exercise the private judgment which some of them deny to us, by quarrelling with one another. One of our comforts, though not altogether the most Christian solace, must be, that those who insist upon the claims of Ecclesiastical authority have disputes among themselves. Rome and England will never join hands upon it. Archbishop Whately, primate of the English Church in Ireland, has bred confusion in his own camp, by denying the Divine right and the Scriptural sanction of Episcopacy, as he rests it upon expediency and civil liberty to choose amid forms where all is free. The Bishop of Ohio has cast public censure upon the Bishop of New York. As to the little ceremonies and observances which some would restore, as parts of the ancient faith, it is not probable that laymen, to any extent, will feel an interest in them. They are fitted to give pleasure only to a priestly or a formal spirit, to engage the feelings of him who enacts them, and the children among the spectators. They remind us always of a military parade, in which the officers have all the glory.

Let it be understood how and why we object to the formularies and ceremonies appointed by Church Authority. Their illegality is their first obnoxious feature, their inherent ten-

dency to increase and exalt themselves is another ; and besides these features, common to all which an attempt is made to enforce, they come at last to be confounded with the essential conditions and principles of faith. Great and good was the example of Hezekiah, king of Judah ; for when he came to his throne we are told, that he did what was right in the sight of God, demolishing images, and breaking in pieces even the brazen serpent, which Moses had made, because prostituted to idolatry.

While we thus entirely renounce all Church Authority, as beset with manifold evils, we are thrown upon the Protestant principle of Private Judgment applied to the Bible. We go all lengths with this principle, we allow it, we urge it, we insist upon it. But we are reminded of the dangers which beset this principle too, of the wild vagaries of Sectarianism, of Mormonism, and Millerism. We answer that we regret all this, but we cannot help it, neither could Church Authority restrain it, when the Church was all powerful. We know the dangers of Rationalism and Infidelity. They are fearful. But how are they to be resisted ? Authority is the most weak of all bulwarks against them. If Miller undertakes to deduce the era of the last conflagration from the length of horns and trumpets, Church Authority will not convince him he is wrong. If the prophet of the Mormons has found another Bible, the hierarchy, which professes to sustain itself upon the older book, will be no match for him. We do indeed require that common sense, sober, instructed reason, and sound discretion be admitted, as the conditions of the right interpretation of the Bible, as of all other books. Then the risk and hazard, which is run in the exercise of private judgment as respects faith, is no greater than the risk and hazard as respects conduct in life, which is run by every individual in the exercise of his moral freedom, in a world where sin abounds.

We are content to rest the security of the Christian Religion upon the wants of the human heart and the value of the Bible. We have no fear that it will perish for want of a hierarchy. The necessities and wants of every age will give to it proper forms, services, and institutions. Our fathers were satisfied with unwarmed meeting houses, with *deaconing* their hymns, and with the music of the human voice. We have introduced the furnace and the organ ; some of us kneel,



some of us stand, and some of us sit, when we pray ; and we believe that the song of praise and the prayer of faith reach the throne of the Most High now as of old time. So long as the Epistles to Timothy and Titus are extant, Christians will know what are the qualifications of worthy ministers, in heart and mind, in temper and talents, and in life, and will need no priestly office or support. Paul directs Timothy as follows : “ And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also,”—faithful men, able to teach, these are the New Testament qualifications for Christian ministers. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Those who love ceremonies, may place them on their proper basis of taste, temperament, and preference, and then they will occasion no Holy Wars.

We can feel the power both of ceremonial and of simple worship. We confess that we have been impressed by the solemn services of the ancient cathedral, where emblems of holiness and loveliness addressed all the senses, where each Christian grace and virtue had an altar, a saint, a marble statue, and a painted canvass, where a mysterious awe enthralled the feelings, and the melodious symphonies of choral strains raised mortals to the skies and brought Seraphim down, where the priests appeared to be a holy company and the frankincense an accepted offering. We confess the power of such a worship. And we have felt the same, we know not whether more or less, in the cold churches of Scotland, where paint and organs are heresies, and the worship is stiffened without a form. Let us combine, if we will, all that impresses us in either, in our own Churches, remembering always the only condition of accepted worship, which has the authority of Jesus Christ—“ God is a spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”

## NOTE. Page 25.

Bishop De Lancey in his Sermon at the consecration of Bishop Eastburn, (page 17,) quoted these "Epistles of Ignatius," with the same apparent reverence with which he quoted Scripture, neither dropping the slightest hint, or making the most distant reference, which would warn his hearers or readers of the exceeding dubiousness allowed by scholars to invest those documents. Is this candid, even though he be fully persuaded of their authority? We prefer the eloquent and truth-telling plea of the great Milton, who says,

"To what end then should they cite him [Ignatius] as authentic for Episcopacy, when they cannot know what is authentic in him, but by the judgment which they brought with them, and not by any judgment which they might safely learn from him? How can they bring satisfaction from such an author, to whose very essence the reader must be fain to contribute his own understanding? Had God ever intended that we should have sought any part of useful instruction from Ignatius, doubtless he would not have so ill-provided for our knowledge, as to send him to our hands in this broken and disjointed plight; and if he intended no such thing, we do injuriously in thinking to taste better the pure evangelic manna by seasoning our mouths with the tainted scraps and fragments of an unknown table, and searching among the verminous and polluted rags, dropped over-worn from the toiling shoulders of time, with these deformedly to quilt, and interlace the entire, the spotless and undecaying robe of truth, the daughter, not of time, but of heaven, only bred up here below, in Christian hearts, between two grave and holy nurses, the doctrine and discipline of the Gospel."—*Prelatical Episcopacy*.

We subjoin a few authorities from the "house divided against itself."

## BISHOP STILLINGFLEET.

"By the loss of records of the British churches, we cannot draw down the succession of Bishops from the Apostles' times.

## REV. E. J. RIDDLE.

"Whatever may become of the Apostolic succession, as a theory, or an institute, it is impossible, at all events, to prove the fact of such succession, or to trace it down the stream of time. It is impossible to prove the personal succession of modern bishops, in an unbroken Episcopal line, or from the Apostles, or men of the Apostolic age."

## BISHOP BURN.

"Bishops and Priests, both were one office, in the beginning of Christ's religion. It is not of importance whether the Priest made the Bishop, or the Bishop the Priest; considering that in the beginning of the Church, there was no difference between a Bishop and a Priest.

Bishops, *as they be now*, were after Priests. In the New Testament, he, who is appointed to be Bishop or Priest, needeth no consecration, for election thereto is sufficient. Temporal men may preach and teach, and in cases of necessity, institute Ministers — they may preach the word of God and minister sacraments, and also appoint men to those offices, with the consent of the congregation.”

BISHOP BURNET.

“This ransacking of records about a succession of orders, is not a thing possible for any to be satisfied about — for a great many ages, all those instruments are lost, so that how ordinations were made in the primitive church, we cannot certainly know. The condition of Christians were very bad, if persons must certainly know how all ministers have been ordained since the Apostles’ days — for it is impossible to satisfy them, unless the authentic records of all the ages of the church could be showed, which is impossible, for though we were satisfied that all the priests of this age were duly ordained, yet, if we be not assured that all who ordained them, had orders rightly given them, and so upwards till the days of the Apostles, the doubt will still remain.”

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

“There is not a minister in all Christendom who is able to trace up, with any approach to certainty, his own spiritual pedigree. It is inconceivable that any one, even moderately acquainted with history, can feel a certainty, or any approach to certainty, that, amidst all the confusion and corruption of the dark ages, no one unduly consecrated or ordained was admitted to sacred offices. Even in the memory of persons living, there existed a Bishop concerning whom there was so much mystery and uncertainty prevailing as to when, where, and by whom he had been ordained, that doubt existed in the minds of many persons living, whether he had been ordained at all. Suppose the probability of an unbroken succession to be as 100 to 1 in each separate case, in favor of the legitimacy and regularity of the transmission, and the links to amount to 50, (or any other number,) the probability of the unbroken continuity of the whole chain must be computed at 99-100 of 99-100 of 99-100, &c. to the end of the whole fifty.”





